

# UPDATE: TASK FORCE PELICAN

Saturday - September 17, 2005

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## Office of the Governor

- **Governor Blanco to Visit Cajundome Shelter Today**
  - o Saturday, September 17, 2005
  - o 11:00 a.m.
  - o Cajundome  
444 Cajundome Blvd.  
Lafayette, LA 70506

## Louisiana Coast Guard

### **OIL SPILL MEDIA INFORMATION DESK**

- The Coast Guard has established an **oil spill media information desk** at the Federal Joint Field Office
  - o To provide media with up-to-date information on the status of southeastern Louisiana oil spill response efforts
  - o Contact: **(225) 242-6064** and **(225) 242-6070**

## Department of Education

- U.S. Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings today announced **\$2.6 billion** for **schools** and **districts impacted by Hurricane Katrina** as well as those schools and districts receiving displaced students
- **\$1.9 billion** of that money will be given to **districts receiving** Katrina's children
  - o Those districts can receive 90% of the state's average per pupil allocation, up to \$7,500
  - o That money can be used for everything from teacher salaries, to transportation, school supplies or other educational costs
- However, Picard did express concern that as he interprets the proposal it does not currently include money for displaced teacher salaries
- Superintendent Picard is grateful for the federal money
  - o He will continue working with Secretary Spelling, FEMA and our congressional delegation as well as local and state officials including Governor Blanco to ensure that all of our educational needs are met.

## **Board of Regents**

- **Sloan Semester**
  - o Southern Regional Education Board, in conjunction with the Sloan Foundation created the Sloan Semester
  - o A catalog of **free electronic courses** available to Katrina-displaced students.
  - o To help college students displaced by Katrina continue their education
  - o The catalog is now open
  - o Students may visit the web site to search for available courses, participating colleges and universities and to start the enrollment process.
  - o Visit Sloan Semester online at <http://www.sloansemester.org>.
- As of Friday, 9/16, the total number of displaced college students re-enrolled at other Louisiana public college and university campuses across the state is **8,629**
- Board of Regents **information hotline** for displaced students
  - o **1-866-415-2269**
  - o [www.regents.state.la.us](http://www.regents.state.la.us)
- **Louisiana Community and Technical College System**
  - o LCTCS established a new toll-free student information line
    - 1-866-310-1586
  - o Previously-published local numbers:
    - 225-922-1633
    - 225-922-0958
    - 225-922-0959
    - 225-922-0804
- **Other Key Public Postsecondary Education Information Numbers**
  - o SUNO students: 1-866-334-7638
  - o SUNO faculty and staff: 1-866-334-8294
  - o UNO students and faculty: 225-578-7816
  - o Delgado CC: 225-216-8336
  - o Nunez CC: 225-216-8344
  - o LTC: 225-922-1633 / 1-800-351-7611
  - o UL System: 225-342-6950

## **Department of Health & Hospitals**

- **Secretary Fred Cerise stresses** that residents of St. Bernard parish planning to return home this weekend must use **caution**
  - o Cerise said the elderly, children, people with health conditions -- particularly asthma, allergies or who are immune-compromised, should avoid returning.
  - o Disease surveillance conducted by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and DHH in New Orleans area has confirmed that unintentional injuries pose the greatest current health risk for those remaining in the area
  - o For people returning to affected area, health officials say the **minimum precautions** that should be followed are:
    - To use bottled water only
    - Use restroom facilities BEFORE entering the areas
    - Use protective equipment (gloves, proper footwear), completely cover all existing wounds and scrapes
    - Wear long sleeves and long pants
    - Do not use machinery and be on the alert for any possible danger.
- DHH has updated the number of deaths related to Hurricane Katrina. The latest update is **579** deaths

## **Department of Social Services**

- Currently, there are **335** general population shelters in Louisiana housing **45,347** displaced citizens
  - o Another **five** special needs shelters house **249** citizens.
- From Sept. 2 - 15, the Office of Family Support has certified 287,504 households (with an average of 3 family members per HH) for total Disaster Food Stamp benefits of more than **\$ 105.2 million**
- Residents of **Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines** and **St. Bernard** parishes may apply for benefits.
  - o The deadline for residents in these 4 parishes is 4:30 p.m., Sept. 22.
  - o Deadlines in other impacted areas include:
    - St. Tammany, 4:30 p.m., Sept. 16
    - Washington Parish, 4:30 p.m., Sept. 17
    - West Feliciana, 4:30 p.m. Sept. 18

## **Department of Labor**

- LDOL continues to urge evacuees from the southeast region of state affected by Hurricane Katrina to provide change of address information in order to receive their Unemployment Insurance benefits.
- LDOL has statewide **job fair information** on its website at [www.laworks.net](http://www.laworks.net)
- The **Bogalusa Career and Job Center** has re-opened for Unemployment Insurance claims assistance
  - o Washington Workforce Center  
438 Avenue B  
Bogaloussa, LA  
(985) 732-6630
- LDOL has accepted **136,000** claims for Unemployment Insurance benefits from in-state claimants.
  - o Another **65,000** have been collect from evacuees in other states

## **Department of Environmental Quality**

- EPA, DEQ and local officials will begin curbside pick up of household hazardous waste in St. Tammany and Jefferson Parish
  - o Materials to be picked up include electronics, batteries, computer hardware, paint, cleaning solvents and lawn and garden products
  - o Items that will not be picked up include: animal manure and carcasses; human waste and other biological items; needles; and spoiled food or damaged items
- EPA's specially equipped air-sampling bus took samples from multiple locations across the New Orleans metropolitan area on September 12 & 13.
  - o The samples were analyzed for volatile priority pollutants such as benzene, toluene, and xylene, which are commonly found in gasoline, as well as other industrial solvents
  - o The screening results indicated that chemical concentrations in most areas are below Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry health standards of concern.
  - o Samples taken around Murphy Oil showed elevated levels of petroleum-related pollutants.

## **Department of Wildlife & Fisheries**

### **- HURRICANE FORCES DEER, RABBIT SEASON CLOSURES IN TWO COASTAL PARISHES**

- LDWF has announced that **deer and rabbit hunting seasons** are **closed** in **Plaquemines and St. Bernard** parishes until further notice
- LDWF Secretary Dwight Landreneau closed the seasons because of extensive damage to the two parishes caused by Hurricane Katrina.
- In an official declaration of emergency published Sept. 16, Landreneau stated, "The season closure will remain in effect until more detailed surveys of the impact to these two species and their habitats can be conducted and a review of the finding is evaluated."

## **Department of Corrections**

- Several state correctional facilities and parish jails on Friday began releasing those individuals evacuated from Orleans Parish Prison who were being held on municipal and parish offenses. Again, these are individuals being held for **minor** offenses with scheduled release dates of 9/16/05 or sooner. A total will be released on Monday.
- State correctional facilities continue to safely house approximately 4000 inmates from Orleans and Jefferson parishes. Parish facilities across the state are housing approximately **2500** inmates.
- Secretary Stalder has traveled to several parish and state facilities over the last few days to ensure staffing, equipment and other needs are being met to keep these facilities and Louisiana communities safe.
- The Department is continuing dialogue with the Humane Society of the United States in reference to providing shelter space and care for hundreds of evacuated and/or abandoned animals due to Hurricane Katrina.
- Probation and Parole officers providing security for the New Orleans Fire Department (stationed at Our Lady of Holy Cross College) will wrap up operations this weekend and return to their home districts.

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